



JOHNSONIAN NEWS LETTER

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The First Ten Years

With this number the *JNL* begins its eleventh year. The rounding out of a decade of service being something of a milestone, we can't resist indulging in some recollections of our early struggles.

Way back in December, 1940, when Jim Osborn suggested starting an eighteenth-century News Letter, and when the first trial pages were handed out at the M.L.A. meetings in Boston, not many of us could have guessed what the future held in store. In many ways the prospect was not very encouraging. But despite wars and rumors of wars the *JNL* puffed along, gradually increasing in size and circulation, until now we have a subscription list which totals about 500.

The first year there were seven numbers (an achievement never equalled since), made up merely of mimeographed pages, on one side only. The next year we dropped down to five, which has proved to be about our speed. Only in volume four have we ever fallen below that schedule. Just why five numbers a year appears to suit our personality, we can't explain. Perhaps the quincunx should be displayed on our masthead, and Sir Thomas Browne adopted as our secondary patron saint. To be sure, every year we plan to keep to a bi-monthly schedule, but by late autumn we are scurrying as usual to get out number five.

Perhaps there is no need to comment here on the various changes in format, but we know librarians and binders will never forgive us for the inexcusable shift in size from $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11$ to $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$ right in the middle of volume five. The change was necessitated by our move from Bethlehem, Pa. to New York City, and we are unrepentant.

If any of you have wondered what determines the time of appearance of the numbers, your editor must confess that the main factor is the thickness of the folder in his desk drawer. When the folder becomes so full it won't easily go back in place, it is time for another number. And it goes. Other factors sometimes delay the appearance of the *JNL* — congestion at the University Service Bureau where the stencils are made, or a particularly high stack of dissertations on your editor's desk. One thing is certain: with the help of all of you there has never been any lack of copy.

With the years and a larger circulation has come a slight increase in professional tone, but not much. Still we try to run the project as a hobby and not as a business, though the days when the editor ran the mimeographing machine and addressed all the envelopes in addition to writing the copy are over. Our subscription records, however, are still not kept in a very businesslike fashion.

Looking back over the years, your editor must confess to some chagrin over the number of crusades which came to naught. In the first number a brave offer was made of a free subscription to the *JNL* for the most amusing error of fact in any *DNB* account of an eighteenth-century figure. Alas! We were never taken up on that generous offer. To no avail we have "plugged" the need for group projects, have advocated scholarly schemes of all sorts. We have carried scores of queries which never elicited a single reply. We have bored readers with lists of books which probably nobody wished to read. On the other hand, some of our proposals have borne fruit: the lists of Work in Progress may have helped stimulate the demand for the current M.L.A. lists; the exchange of news of British scholars during the war we hope did something to aid international amity; the listings of books and articles may have had some value. Certainly the yearly Johnsonian luncheons, so long as they could efficiently be arranged, were fun.

But most of all the *JNL* has stood as a symbol of a scholarly group feeling which is infectious. Indeed, for your editor the most pleasant reward, which has made all the labor seem worthwhile, has been the friendly, cooperative spirit shown by eighteenth-century enthusiasts here and abroad — from Norway to Buenos Aires, from Saudi Arabia to Peiping

{we are still waiting for a subscriber in Peru).

Index to Volumes I-X

Although the greater part of the *JNL* is devoted to ephemeral gossip, some important scholarly notes have occasionally been sandwiched in among the froth. But it is not always easy, even for your editor, to remember just where these items may be found. Consequently, we are overjoyed to have N. Lester provide us with a subject index of eighteenth-century references appearing in the first ten volumes of the *JNL*. His labor of love, which will save many of us much fruitless searching, will be sent out free to all subscribers in the next few weeks. Omitted for obvious reasons are references to modern scholars, casual professional gossip, the chit-chat about M.L.A. affairs. But all material concerned with eighteenth-century people and places has been indexed.

We feel certain that all of you will be as grateful to Lester as we are. Perhaps we should add that some copies of early numbers of the *JNL* are still available (price 20¢ a piece). If you want to fill out gaps in your files — for those who are the saving type and who have kept the News Letter — let us know what you lack.

News From England

On November 30, at the Gough Square Johnson House in London, Heinemann, the English publishers of Boswell's *London Journal*, gave a party celebrating the launching of the volume. The party was well attended by Boswellian scholars, by dignitaries of all sorts. We hear that the most popular of the refreshments was one that Boswell mentions several times in his writing, Negus, named for a sea captain before Boswell's time, and consisting of mulled port, laced with brandy, and scented with cinnamon and various herbs.

In general, the Journal has been very well received in the British periodicals. The reviews by Lord David Cecil in the *Observer*, S.C. Roberts in the *Spectator*, V.S. Pritchett in the *New Statesman and Nation*, and anonymously in the *TLS* could scarcely have been better. To be sure, B. Ifor Evans in the *Manchester Guardian* and a few others have expressed reservations concerning propriety of normalizing the text; and Sir John Squire in the *Illustrated London News* confesses that he would have preferred a few

asterisks in certain places. But the press has largely been enthusiastic, as in this country. From various letters, we hear that many readers feel that the publication hurts Boswell's reputation as a man. One correspondent writes: "Many people are thoroughly shocked by it, and one Scotsman I know apparently thinks that Jamie is letting Scotland down — showing all the worst features of the Scottish character. The soundest judgment comes from a man who says that the Journal makes him admire Boswell more, and dislike him more, than previously."

On the evening of December 13, L.F. Powell read a paper on the new Journal to the Johnson Club. Powell's presidential address in Lichfield last September is now available in printed form, in the Transactions of the Lichfield Johnson Society, 1949-50. It can be secured from P. Laithwaite, Burton Old Rd., Lichfield, for 1/8. In his address Powell comments on the ending of his long task of editing Boswell's *Life* and on the various problems he had to meet.

We hear that Lord MacMillan was to officiate at the annual wreath laying ceremony in Westminster Abbey on December 13, and hope his address will be published. While writing of Johnson and London, we might mention that from all accounts the appeal for the Gough Square House has so far been well received. In a later issue we will give a further report on the organization of the Friends of the Johnson House.

E.S. de Beer writes: "One of the more interesting recent publications is Jane E. Norton's Guide to the National and Provincial Directories of England and Wales, excluding London, published before 1856, one of the Royal Historical Society's Guides and Handbooks. The provincial directories begin in 1763, but there are very few before 1780. London is covered by a book by C.W.F. Goss, 1932. Miss Norton has an excellent introduction on the origins etc. of the directories, and generally seems to have done her work admirably. Another book of note last year is Pattee Byng's Journal, 1718-1720, edited by J.L. Cranmer Byng for the Navy Records Society. Byng was chiefly at Naples, etc., acting as agent for his father, Sir George, but had one hasty visit to London — 44 days all told, of which he spent twelve in England; he also visited Vienna. Apart from its naval and political interest the journal has a good deal of general matter about Italy and so on. And its author is a pleasing young man."

A New History of English Literature

As we have remarked on other occasions, the mid-twentieth century is a time of consolidation, of re-appraisal of our literary heritage. After the furious research of the past thirty years, it was time for a revision of the earlier histories which had been based on insufficient and often erroneous evidence. The latest excellent survey of the eighteenth-century period is that by L.I. Bredvold contained in the Oxford Press's new *History of English Literature*. Most of us will lament the fact that Bredvold was allowed only 111 pages to cover substantially the same ground that Sherburn covered in 410. In passing, we might comment on the interesting allocation of space in this *History*, where the literature before Chaucer occupies 144 pages, and all of the Romantic, Victorian, and early twentieth-century literature is squeezed into 156.

In the meagre space allowed him, Bredvold has done wonders to compress and organize the basic facts. His is a sympathetic and understanding approach, in accord with the best modern scholarship. He brings in fresh quotations and perceptive criticisms, refusing to follow any old stereotyped pattern. For those who want a compressed and hurried survey of the period, Bredvold's is to be recommended. It is a pity that more space was not allowed him for bibliography.

Queries

Clarence Tracy, now at the University of Saskatchewan, asks if anyone can help him identify an allusion in Johnson's *Life of Savage*. Johnson refers (paragraph 95 of Hill's edition) to a copy of verses in which the failings of good men were recounted, etc. Hill does not attempt to identify the poem. Can any of you do better than that?

What has become of the Lady Winchilsea manuscripts, formerly in the possession of Sir Edmund Gosse, sold at Sotheby's in 1929? This inquiry comes from D.G. Neill (New College, Oxford) who is engaged in research on Lady Winchilsea and would be happy to know of the whereabouts of these or other manuscripts.

Henry H. Adams (Cornell) writes that he has nearly completed a supplement to Jim Osborn's "Checklist" of Macdonald's Dryden bibliography, and would appreciate from the readers of the *JNL*

any bibliographical corrections they may know of, or information concerning the location of any rarities in the list.

A Cycle of Cathay

One of the most fascinating cross currents in the shifting sea of ideas and aesthetic fads of the eighteenth century is the vogue of Chinese imitation. In his *A Cycle of Cathay* (Columbia U.P.) William Appleton traces the rise and fall of this enthusiasm, from the first glowing accounts of China sent back by early missionaries and travellers, through the vogue of the Noble Sage and the controversies over the origins of primitive language, on through the cult of chinoiserie, with the accompanying satiric attacks, to the final disillusionment with Chinese life and customs which followed the Macartney embassy of 1792. Appleton's book is a sweeping general survey, but one which should prove highly interesting to everyone interested in the tides of English taste. Attractively printed, it is provided with excellent illustrations and delightful end papers made from a map of China by John Speed in 1626.

The Lily B. Campbell Volume

A number of the contributions to *Essays Critical and Historical Dedicated to Lily B. Campbell*, by members of the English Dept. at U.C.L.A., have to do with our period. To be listed here are: H.T. Swedenberg, Jr., "On Editing Dryden's Early Poems"; Edward N. Hooker, "The Early Poetical Career of Samuel Woodforde: the Heavenly Muse in the Age of Reason"; William Matthews, "Tarpaulin Arabick in the Days of Pepys"; Gretchen Graf Pahl, "John Locke as Literary Critic and Biblical Interpreter"; Alexander H. H Chorney, "Wycherley's Manly Reinterpreted"; John Loftis, "The Genesis of Steele's *The Conscious Lovers*"; and Vinton A. Dearing, "The 1737 Editions of Alexander Pope's Letters."

Johnsonian Studies 1887-1950

Modesty should forbid an editor's pushing his own book, but, after all, if a scholar won't advertise his own work, who will? At least it may be permitted to let you know that the survey and list of Johnsonian studies which have been published since the

appearance of Birkbeck Hill's edition of the *Life*, is scheduled d for March publication by the University of Minnesota Press. Other details, no doubt, will be sent to you by the publisher. One request we should like to make. The list undoubtedly contains some bad factual errors, and omits important books and articles. Please send in whatever corrections and additions you turn up, and we will prepare an errata and addenda section for inclusion in a later *JNL*.

Completion of Hill-Powell Edition

On December 21, volumes V and VI of L.F. Powell's revision of the Birkbeck Hill edition of the *Life of Johnson* and the *Tour to the Hebrides* were published in England. So far we haven't seen copies, but we hail this great event with enthusiasm. Long have we waited for this day! The index volume, in particular, is one we will welcome with open arms. It will be an indispensable tool for all of us.

Miscellaneous News Items

We are distressed to note the death of R.K. Root, one of our subscribers from the start, and one of the best known scholars in our field. Generations of students at Princeton were introduced to Pope and the eighteenth century through his inspiring teaching. We lament also the passing of one of the most active *JNL* supporters, Dr. H.T. Radin of New York City, a physician and amateur collector, with a fantastic knowledge of books and literary scholarship and a generous desire to help others interested in similar topics.

J. Max Patrick (Univ. of Florida) has just taken over the editorship of the *Seventeenth Century News Letter*. Subscriptions from new and old subscribers (\$1) should be sent to Patrick at the Univ. of Florida, Gainesville, Florida.

We pass on a few temporary addresses which may be of use to some of you: D. Nichol Smith, 44a South Esplanade, Glenelg, Adelaide, S. Australia; Edward N. Hooker, 8 St. Clements Gardens, Cambridge, England; Lillian and George McCue, Care Rollin Thorne, Avenida Arequipa 201, Miraflores, Lima, Peru (so for a while we will have our subscriber in Peru!)

Emmett Avery's *Congreve's Plays on the Eighteenth-Century Stage*

will be published soon in the M.L.A. monograph series.

Vedder Gilbert (Toledo) writes: "Mr. A. Vere Woodman, of Wing, Leighton Buzzard, Beds. England, has been very helpful in supplying information concerning Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire families. He tells me that he is willing to help others. I have found his professional fees very reasonable."

Bob Metzdorf sends word of a Christmas performance in Adams House, Harvard, of David Garrick's *The Lying Valet*.

Henri Talon, Professor of English Literature in the Univ. of Dijon, is bringing out a selection from the journals and papers of John Byrom. Bonamy Dobree will provide a Foreword.

C.A. Miller of Washington, D.C. is completing a study of Sir John Hawkins, which he intends to print privately in the near future.

Congratulations to F.W. Bateson on the appearance of the first issue of his new periodical, *Essays in Criticism*. We are green with envy, wishing we had ourselves thought of the title of one of his short essays in the first number. See for yourself what it is. We will look forward to some articles on eighteenth-century topics in future issues.

It is exciting to hear from Louis Wright's *Report from the Folger Library* that the library has acquired a large collection of rare tracts and pamphlets from the Harmsworth Trust, all having to do with the political and social history of England in the period of 1640 to 1700.

A mammoth project, which will be of value to all of us if it can be launched, is described in the most recent *Broadsheet* of the Theatre Library Ass'n. This is nothing more or less than the microprinting of the bulk of British drama between 1500 and 1800 and the American drama from its beginning to 1830. Henry W. Wells (Columbia) will be editor in chief and Albert Boni is trying to get the project started. Someday it may be possible to have transcripts of every play published in England before the nineteenth century in one file on your desk. To have 5000 plays condensed to a little over two feet will be something!

New Inexpensive Texts

Since we have complained in the past of the dearth of cheap texts of eighteenth-century works, we are glad to take this opportunity

to review the recent appearance of a large number of useful volumes. After a long dry period, we are inundated by a wave of rival publications. Our only complaint is that it is too bad to have such wide duplication of standard works, with little experimenting with less well known pieces. Thus we have *Gulliver's Travels* with Introductions by J.F. Ross (Rinehart), George Sherburn (Harpers), and (with *Tale of a Tub*) Robert B. Heilman (Modern Library). The Modern Library has reissued Louis Kronenberger's selection of the poems of Pope, with an added persuasive Foreword by J.W. Krutch. The Rinehart selection by W.K. Wimsatt, Jr. is expected soon, as is Bertrand Bronson's volume of Johnson's works.

Most concentration comes in the field of fiction. The Modern Library college series includes new Introductions by Mark Shorer for *Moll Flanders*, Howard Mumford Jones for *Joseph Andrews*, George Sherburn for *Tom Jones*, and Bergen Evans for *Tristram Shandy*. In the Rinehart series we have Introductions by Godfrey Davies for *Moll Flanders*, Maynard Mack for *Joseph Andrews*, Robert Gorham Davis for *Humphry Clinker*, and Samuel Monk for *Tristram Shandy*. For obvious reasons we will not attempt to evaluate these rival Introductions, or to make invidious comparisons. But we do feel moved to make some observations as to the matter of texts. In general, the Rinehart series is much more scrupulous and accurate in the selection and preparation of their texts. The Modern Library merely reprints in their new college series the texts which have long been in print in their older series. And unfortunately these are often not very good. Take, for example, the volume containing Swift's *Gulliver* and the *Tale of a Tub*. Certainly it is slipshod to reissue a text of the *Tale*, lacking the "Mechanical Operation of the Spirit," and containing the spurious "History of Martin," without any strong warning to students that it is not accepted by any reputable modern Swift scholar.

On the other hand, we know that the editors of Rinehart volumes, many of them, are taking considerable pains to produce accurate texts. Again as a sample, Monk has attempted in his *Tristram Shandy* to reproduce as exactly as possible in an inexpensive volume both the typographical mannerisms and the punctuation of the first edition, not even regularizing inconsistencies between early and late volumes.

The Rinehart Company is also beginning a valuable series of

critical studies (paper covers), with David Daiches' *Robert Burns* as the first number. An admirable volume, it will be very valuable for everyone teaching the late eighteenth century.

John Angus Burrell (Columbia), after many careful readings of the whole of *Clarissa* (we salute him!), and after much heart searching, has produced a new abridged one volume edition (786 pages) for the Modern Library. Most teachers of the history of the novel will probably welcome it enthusiastically, at the same time lamenting the fact that it is too difficult to make students go through the entire work. But Burrell has done an excellent job of cutting, retaining many passages which had been omitted from previous abridgments, and keeping as close as possible to Richardson's spirit and tone.

A few other recent college texts should be noticed. Maynard Mack has provided a top-notch introduction to Volume V of the Prentice-Hall English Masterpieces series. Designed for freshman or sophomore survey courses, the volume unfortunately does not contain enough material for advanced courses. But we wish Mack's Introduction could be separately printed. Volume III of Auden and Pearson's *Poets of the English Language* (Viking) contains a useful selection of eighteenth-century poetry.

It is a pleasure to pass on word that The Everyman's Library volume of Dryden's *Dramatic Poesy and Other Essays*, edited by William Henry Hudson, is again in print.

Some Recent Books

Of Dick Altick's *The Scholar Adventurers* (Macmillan), so widely praised in the newspapers and periodicals, there is little need to say much here, except to add our own bit of testimony — that we found it delightful. It should make many a young graduate student want to rush out to conquer the Public Record Office, or to trail some literary hero across the world. Certainly Altick catches the spirit of adventure which those outside our profession often fail to understand but which makes life so worth while to many of us. We recommend it heartily to anyone who is depressed by the dull round of theme grading and committee meetings — something to remind him of the coming summer or the next sabbatical leave.

Although largely concerned with seventeenth-century poets, Marjorie Nicolson's *The Breaking of the Circle* (Northwestern U.P.) should be mentioned here. This study of the effect of the "new

science" upon Donne, Milton, and their contemporaries provides a background for a better interpretation of many of the problems of eighteenth-century poetry. Particularly fascinating is her interpretation of Donne's *Anniversary Poems* in Chapter III, the one part of the book not included in the original Northwestern University lectures.

William M. Sale's long awaited *Samuel Richardson: Master Printer* (Cornell U.P.) is the first thorough study of Richardson's business career, and incidentally is one of the most complete examinations ever made of the work of an eighteenth-century printing house. Sale has tried to identify the various books and periodicals which Richardson printed, often using printers' ornaments and other devices as evidence in his exciting search. From all evidence assembled, a new understanding of the novelist's ideas and preferences has resulted.

A very useful tool is Powell Stewart's *British Newspapers and Periodicals, 1632-1800*, in the University of Texas Library (Univ. of Texas, 1950). More than a mere catalogue of library holdings, it provides valuable bibliographical evidence about the printing of many of the items included.

We are delighted finally to receive volume III of the *Percy Letters* (Univ. of La. Press) — the correspondence with Thomas Warton, edited by Leah Dennis and M.G. Robinson. Since it has only just arrived, we have had no time to examine it thoroughly.

An important linguistic and critical study is Josephine Miles' *The Primary Language of Poetry in the 1740's and 1840's*, Univ. of Calif. Studies in English Vol. XIX, No. 2. This is a continuation of her earlier study concentrating on the 1640's, and is to be followed by one on the 1940's. Through this series one can study the technical changes in poetic diction which accompanied the gradual shifting of poetic sensibility. Included are numerous charts and tables.

Just issued by the Columbia U.P. is W.B. Gardner's critical edition of *The Prologues and Epilogues of John Dryden*.

Raymond Havens writes: "Stuart Piggott's *William Stukeley: an Eighteenth-Century Antiquary*, which came out this spring is admirably done, illuminating for the Gothic revival, antiquarianism, primitivism, etc." (to which we heartily add our own recommendation). Havens also mentions E.C. Mason's *The Mind of Henry Fuseli*; a new life of Capability Brown by Dorothy Stroud; and another of John Newton, Cowper's friend. He adds that Ralph Dutton's *The*

Garden has been re-issued by Scribners.

Index To The Art Bulletin

Students of the eighteenth century may be interested to consult the index to the first thirty volumes of the *Art Bulletin*, just issued by the Index Society in conjunction with the College Art Association. It is worth using on a wide variety of subjects. In addition to general topics such as "aesthetics," "allegory," "landscape," "romanticism," etc., the index will lead the researcher to references to many prominent eighteenth-century figures. Of course such artists as Hogarth and Reynolds have many entries after their names. Also included are many literary figures - Addison, Burke, Blake, Dryden, Spence, Berkeley, Swift, Pope, Walpole, Boswell and Dr. Johnson, among others.

Bi-Centenary of The New York Stage

The first theatrical productions known to have been given in New York city were in the season of 1750-51. In celebrating the rounding out of the second century of the New York stage, ANTA, the Museum of the City of New York, and the Drama Dept. of Columbia University are all arranging special events. As the oldest theatrical museum in the city, the Brander Matthews Dramatic Museum of Columbia University plans a special exhibition covering the two centuries of the New York stage. The exhibition opens February 26, at 4 P.M., and the public is invited to attend. As part of the program there will be read a hitherto unpublished paper on the history of stock companies in New York up to 1900, written by the late Professor G.C.D. Odell, and found among his papers after his death. The exhibition will continue until October 30, 1951 — open 2-5 P.M., Mondays through Fridays during the regular academic terms.

Walter L. Williams writes that there are references made to Johnson and Boswell in *The Lawyer* by E.S.P. Haynes.

T.H. White's *The Age of Scandal* is a very disappointing book, inaccurate, slipshod, and not very amusing. After his delightful *Mistress Nasham's Repose*, many of us were awaiting his next book with eagerness.

Because of lack of space we must postpone our usual listing of articles until the April number.